

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media platforms are among the most important modern means of communication due to their unique features that are not available in other communication methods. In today's era, humans have become the primary target of communication processes aimed at influencing their thoughts, minds, and psychology. The impact of social media has become evident and observable in its massive use across all times and places by individuals. Its significance lies in its extensive influence, as it attracts a wide range of users, whether educated or illiterate. This is due to its technical capabilities and its coverage of various political, economic, and cultural issues. Religious topics are among the most significant issues followed by individuals through social media. Such content introduces people to aspects of their religion, provides proper religious guidance, and addresses their concerns and interests. This ultimately contributes to enhancing their awareness and fostering their religious education. Among the most prominent groups engaging with these platforms is the youth. They are one of the most important and largest social groups that use social media. They closely follow religious topics that spark their interest, address their concerns, and enrich their knowledge. This awareness-building effect influences their behaviors and values, reinforcing and preserving their religious culture.

2. The Methodological Framework of the Study

When conducting any study, there must be reasons that drive us to choose the topic, goals we aim to achieve, a problem from which a set of questions arises, and hypotheses to answer them, in addition to defining the concepts relevant to the study. The topic of the study may have been previously addressed by researchers or in some of its aspects, which will be covered in this chapter

2.1 Reasons for Choosing the Topic

The reasons are determined by its contribution to the scientific accumulation regarding the impact of Facebook, one of the social media sites, on its users. Additionally, any study includes subjective and objective reasons that lead the researcher to choose their study topic.

The reasons for our choice include:

a. Subjective Reasons:

Interest in topics related to the religious aspect, especially when linked to social media sites that offer their users the best content to highlight the importance of their role. This interest is also due to our belonging to the study community, allowing us to benefit from the results.

b. Objective Reasons

The novelty of the study topic is one of the reasons that led us to focus on it, especially since there is a need to address such studies. Additionally, our library lacks specialized studies on topics related to the religious aspect.

The increasing and widespread idea of cultural globalization, which results in the blending of local cultures, has motivated us to address this topic to highlight the role of social media sites in spreading religious culture through content that works to solidify religion and emphasize it as an important element in preserving the identity of individuals and society.

The modern style in which religious posts appear on social media sites, Previously, these programs were broadcast as television and radio shows or in various print formats, which required much time in terms of understanding and comprehension and often resulted in audience boredom. Furthermore, audiences did not have the ability to choose the topics and issues they wanted, leading to unfulfilled religious needs and desires. In contrast, social media sites offer unique features, such as direct interaction and communication with users and many choices that they prefer. Thus, this study aims to explore the extent to which youth's desires are met and their benefits from the content.

2.2 Importance of the Study

The importance of the study stems from the significance of the topic itself, which is "Social Media and Its Role in Religious Education Among Youth." This importance is highlighted by understanding the impact of the content provided to this demographic, thus emphasizing the role of social media alongside other communication tools and various religious institutions in religious education and awareness.

The study's importance lies in providing a scientific analysis of the reality of social media in society to assess its ability to convey religious information and knowledge. It aims to identify both positive and negative aspects in its coverage of various religious topics, with the goal of offering solutions to enhance its effectiveness to the desired level.

Additionally, the study contributes to supporting scientific research and understanding the current state of studies related to communication that address the public, focusing on the interests and concerns of youth.

2.3 Objectives of the Study

The study aims to achieve several key objectives, including:

- Understanding the attitudes of youth towards their use of social media content and identifying the motives and reasons behind their use of these platforms.
- Determining the patterns in the results obtained to establish a foundation for subsequent studies.
- Revealing the significance of social media to youth and assessing its impact on them.

2.4 Problem Statement

Social media platforms today are considered one of the most prominent modern communication tools that significantly impact individuals and communities, as they have become a major platform for transmitting information and ideas, including religious topics. The influence of these platforms is particularly increasing in the lives of Algerian youth, who interact with the religious content shared on these platforms. Among the types of content

that are popular on these sites are religious posts, which vary in style and orientation, targeting different social segments, especially the youth, who form a large portion of the users of these platforms.

The research problem lies in trying to understand how religious posts on social media influence Algerian youth and whether these posts actually contribute to their religious education. Additionally, are these posts capable of providing sound and effective religious guidance, or do they contribute to creating confusion and ambiguity in the understanding of religion among the youth? And does the response of youth to these posts vary based on their cultural and religious background?

Through this issue, the research aims to study the role of religious posts in the religious education of Algerian youth on platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and analyze their impact in terms of enhancing correct religious understanding or contributing to the spread of distorted or incorrect ideas.

Main research question: To what extent do religious posts on social media platforms contribute to religious education among Algerian youth?

2.5 Sociological Approach

The sociological theory is considered a crucial and fundamental stage in social scientific research, providing the framework within which the subject of study is defined. Social theory is the cornerstone that grants research its scientific form.

In our study, we relied on functional theory, as social media platforms aim to perform specific functions. They offer their audience various content that serves to enhance and solidify religious culture. According to this theory, terms such as role, adaptation, and integration are essential conditions for functional integration within society as a whole. Therefore, social media platforms strive to fulfil an important role: disseminating and conveying various information and knowledge to their users. (Timasheff, p331).

We also relied on Marshall McLuhan's theory of technological determinism, which suggests that communication media have a significant impact and that this impact evolves with the development of these media, from the advent of printing to the era of communication technologies such as television, and into the phase of interactive communication (social media). Regarding social media, Marshall McLuhan stated that "social media has changed our sensory lives and ways of thinking." He also believes that social media has a profound effect on users, similar to other forms of communication, regardless of the content presented to the audience. "When the medium is new, it is the message; it influences society and makes it behave in new ways." (Ihdaden, 2007, p78).

We also relied on George Gerbner's Cultivation Theory, which suggests that communication media can influence individuals' knowledge and perception of the worlds around them, especially for those who are heavily exposed to these media. This theory considers social media to be a unique means of cultivation among individuals, particularly the youth, due to its features such as real-time interaction, video, and the provision of information they seek. The theory assumes that the content on social media influences users' beliefs and attitudes about their social reality. The cultural indicators research within Cultivation Theory focused on two main issues: (Ismail, 2003, p. 266)

1. Studying the messages, values, and mental images reflected by communication media.
2. Studying the independent contribution of mass messages to the audience's perception of social reality.

2.6 Defining Concepts Procedurally

It is undeniable that defining concepts is a fundamental requirement in presenting and delivering scientific studies and research so that the reader can consciously understand the intended meaning of a concept according to the subject of the study. In this regard, Raymond and others believe that a procedural concept is one built empirically based on direct observations or collected information (Badawi, 1994, p116) They also suggest that to

construct a procedural concept, one should start with realistic indicators, selecting and combining them to eventually arrive at a procedural definition of concepts that are theoretically defined. (Badawi, 1994, p. 127).

2.6.1 Religious Publications

These refer to content with a religious nature provided by social media pages. Religion and its issues include discussions, meetings, seminars, and religious videos aimed at guidance, awareness, and explaining religious principles. It also addresses all aspects of life and serves as a tool for education and spreading religious awareness through these pages for such purposes.

2.6.2 Religious Culture

Religious culture refers to Islamic culture as a distinct culture derived from the Quran, the Sunnah, the Arabic language (the language of the Quran), as well as traditions, customs, values, and everything an individual acquires as a member of society. It involves examining how interested young people are in acquiring this culture, gaining religious information, principles, and facts, and their ability to understand religious matters correctly and form appropriate positions on various issues from a religious perspective. This allows them to interact positively with their environment and determine their stance on issues or problems related to these fundamentals from cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects, which can impact their personal lives. (Ahmed, p. 173).

2.6.3 Youth

The concept of youth is defined by using age as a variable to select the study sample. This is not meant to exclude other age groups but is based on the expectation that individuals aged 18-35 are the most active users of social media. This group is characterized by their engagement with religious content on social media, including exposure to the content offered by religious pages, interaction with the content, trust in the material

presented, positive evaluation of the published content, and its role in enhancing their religious knowledge.

2.6.4.Social Media Platforms

These are online platforms that allow users, specifically young people according to this study, to communicate with each other and others in a virtual world where they share interests, exchange ideas, and discuss various issues of concern. Social media platforms offer freedom of publication, encourage participation and interactivity, and fulfil the desire for virtual communication and interaction with friends from around the world.

3. Methodological Structure of the Field Study

The success of any field study depends on how its topics are approached and the type of method used to address the subject. Therefore, the validity of the research fundamentally relies on the methodology followed. Researchers must adhere to a set of methodological rules to impart a scientific approach to their research, uncover the causes and consequences of the phenomenon studied in an organized manner, and outline the methods used, the sample, and the techniques employed in the study, as well as the study's scope. The study sample consisted of 200 male and female Facebook users aged between 18 and 40 years.

3.1 Data Collection Tools

In scientific research, data collection tools refer to the various methods a researcher uses to gather the targeted information and data within the framework of a specific methodology or multiple methodologies. Based on the objectives of our research, which aimed to understand the role Facebook can play as a communication tool in religious education among youth by assessing the impact of the content it provides to this demographic, we selected a questionnaire as the research tool, convinced that it would help achieve the study's goals.

The study was conducted using an electronic questionnaire, which was sent to the respondents via Facebook and WhatsApp. The questionnaire included, in addition to the first

section on general data such as gender, age, and marital status (designed to understand the characteristics and experiences of the research sample), a second section focused on the indicators and dimensions of the hypothesis: "The more religious content on Facebook aligns with the interests of youth, the more it contributes to their religious education." This section contained 9 questions.

3.2 Statistical Data Analysis

After completing the data collection for the field study, the data was coded and entered into a computer, then processed, analysed, and the statistical results extracted using the "Statistical Package for the Social Sciences" (SPSS). The statistical variables varied between Nominal, Ordinal, and Scale variables. Accordingly, the researcher applied statistical procedures appropriate to each variable through the following tests and statistical treatments:

- Simple Frequencies
- Percentages

3.2 Sample and Sampling Method

The study population and sample consisted of young Algerians who had active Facebook accounts during the study period. The sample was selected using the available or convenient sampling method, which involves selecting individuals who are accessible. Due to the difficulty of conducting a comprehensive survey of the research population (youth), it was necessary to conduct the study on a subset of the total population, choosing a specific part of it and subjecting it to study to draw conclusions applicable to the entire research population. This selection process, known as sampling in scientific research, aims to obtain a representative sample of the entire research population within the constraints of time and available resources. The sample was purposively selected, focusing on youth who follow religious posts on social media (respondents were asked if they follow religious posts on social media, which was a condition for completing the questionnaire). The purposive

sample allows the researcher to deliberately choose the size of the sample from the studied population based on full knowledge of the characteristics and features that should be represented. The goal was not to have the sample represent all youth but rather to ensure that it accurately represented the main variables of the study, particularly the control variables. The sample was selected as follows:

A. Sample Size: This depends on several factors, primarily the size of the research population and the degree of variation or homogeneity among the population members. Given the large size of the research population (youth), the sample size was determined based on the available timeframe, resulting in a study conducted on 200 individuals from the total population.

B. Gender Variable: The sample maintained a relative balance between the number of males and females, with close proportions between them.

C. Age Variable: The sample included young people aged 18 to 40 years.

Out of the 200 questionnaires sent, 179 were completed, giving a response rate of 82.5%. Of the 179 returned questionnaires, 14 were discarded for two main reasons:

- Some were not fully completed.
- Some lacked seriousness in the responses, missing important data.

Therefore, the final number of questionnaires analysed was 165.

3.3 Study Methodology and Tools

2.3.1 Study Methodology

The study—focused on "Religious Posts on Social Media and Their Role in Religious Education Among Youth"—aimed to determine the extent to which Facebook contributes to religious education among youth through its posts, and how well these posts align with the study sample's interests and their views on these posts, as well as their benefits from them.

Given the nature and current goals of the study, we adopted the descriptive-analytical method, considering it the most effective in revealing and highlighting the truth of the

phenomenon. The descriptive method studies the phenomenon as it exists in reality, describes it accurately, and interprets it to derive its meaning and generalize the results about the phenomenon or subject under research.

3.4 Study Scope

- A. Virtual Scope:** The study included a sample of Facebook users.
- B. Time Scope:** Any field research requires a certain timeframe for completion, which can be short or long depending on the topic's nature and the difficulties faced by the researcher. The timeframe for this study was from the beginning of May 2024 to mid-May 2024, during which the electronic questionnaire was sent to users. Data extraction and analysis for this sample took place from mid-June to early July 2024.

4 Analysis and Interpretation of the Study's Data Tables

To verify the validity or invalidity of the hypothesis proposed in this study, it was necessary to present the quantitative results through tables, making them readable and interpretable. This chapter, therefore, begins with an analysis of the content provided by religious posts on social media during the study period. This involves first examining the form of these posts, then their content, leading to conclusions. Finally, the chapter presents a summary, followed by an analysis of the general data tables for the respondents and then the specific data tables related to the hypothesis, followed by the results of each hypothesis.

Table 1. (Distribution of the Research Sample by Gender)

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Gender	Frequency
Males	68	41.21%	Males	68
Females	97	58.79%	Females	97
Total	165	100%	Total	165

The table shows that the majority of the sample is female, with a percentage of 58.79%, compared to 41.21% male participants. Although the aim was to achieve a balanced gender distribution within the study population, the higher number of females compared to males

can be attributed to the number of questionnaires that were not returned or were incomplete. This issue was more prevalent among male respondents, leading to a higher number of completed questionnaires from females.

Table 2. (showing motivations for following religious posts on Facebook)

Motivation for Following	Frequency	Percentage
Desire to know religious rulings on certain issues	105	26.85%
Keen to increase your religious knowledge	123	31.46%
Using free time in beneficial activities	43	11%
Listening to advice, guidance, and counselling in its programs	56	14.32%
Provides solutions to social problems	64	16.37%
Total	391	100%

The table shows that the highest percentage, 31.46%, of respondents follow religious posts on Facebook to increase their religious knowledge. The second highest percentage, 26.85%, is for those who seek to know religious rulings on certain issues. The third percentage, 16.37%, represents those who are looking for solutions to social problems. The fourth percentage, 14.32%, is for respondents who follow religious posts for advice, guidance, and counsel. The fifth and lowest percentage, 11%, is for those who follow religious posts to make productive use of their free time.

The table indicates that the primary motivations for following religious posts are not merely for entertainment or filling free time but for more meaningful reasons. Respondents are primarily interested in enhancing their religious knowledge, understanding religious

principles, and seeking guidance on social issues. This reflects the respondents' commitment to benefiting from religious content to increase their awareness and religious culture.

Table 3. (Shows the characteristics that respondents prefer in religious posts)

Preferred Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Being purposeful	31	18.79%
Being relevant to reality	88	53.33%
Addressing users' concerns	46	27.88%
Total	165	100%

From the table, we observe that the highest percentage, 53.33%, is for respondents who prefer religious posts to align with their lived reality. The second highest percentage, 27.88%, is for respondents who prefer religious posts to address the concerns of their followers. The third percentage, 18.79%, represents respondents who generally prefer religious posts to be purposeful.

From the above, we notice that the majority of respondents prefer religious posts on Facebook to reflect the reality in which they live. In daily life, individuals face problems and phenomena that require sound religious advice and guidance to solve and confront. Therefore, individuals choose and prefer posts that they feel mirror their reality and directly relate to their lives. Consequently, religious posts should take into account the social reality of individuals, their concerns, and interests, and provide awareness and guidance accordingly.

Table 04. Preferred Religious Topics Among Respondents

Topics	Frequency	Percentage
Doctrinal	76	46.06%
Devotional	36	21.82%
Transactions	12	7.27%
Ethics and Morals	22	13.34%

Preaching and Guidance	7	4.24%
Intellectual and Cultural	12	7.27%
Total	165	100%

From the table, we observe that the highest percentage, 46.06%, is for respondents who prefer following doctrinal topics. The second highest percentage, 21.82%, is for those who prefer following devotional topics. The third percentage, 13.34%, represents respondents who prefer following topics related to ethics and morals. The fourth percentage, 7.27%, is for those who prefer following topics related to transactions, in addition to those who prefer intellectual and cultural topics. The lowest percentage, 4.24%, is for respondents who prefer following topics related to preaching and guidance.

From the above, we notice that doctrinal topics hold the highest rank in terms of respondents' interest, which is natural due to their significant importance in an individual's life and their adherence to their beliefs, such as faith in God, His angels, His books, and His messengers. There is also considerable interest in devotional topics, as respondents seek to learn about various acts of worship to draw closer to God and understand how to perform them. On the other hand, we notice a lower level of interest in topics related to ethics and morals, as well as topics on transactions with others and intellectual and cultural subjects. Respondents may turn to other sources outside of Facebook's religious posts for these topics, which may also be due to the scarcity of such topics in religious posts on Facebook, as evidenced by our analytical study of religious posts on the platform.

Table 05. (Compatibility of Religious Post Content with the Religious Inclinations of Respondents)

Compatibility	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	45	27.27%
No	14	8.49%
Sometimes	106	64.24%
Total	165	100%

The highest percentage in the table above is 64.24%, representing respondents who believe that the content of religious posts sometimes aligns with their religious inclinations. The second highest percentage, 27.27%, represents respondents who believe that the content of religious posts does align with their religious inclinations. The lowest percentage, 8.49%, represents respondents who believe that the content of religious posts does not align with their religious inclinations.

From the above, we observe that the majority of respondents believe that religious posts on Facebook sometimes align with their religious inclinations. This means that some religious posts align with the respondents' religious interests and concerns, while others do not. This variation is due to the different sources of the posts and the diversity of content, which affects the reliability and credibility of the information.

Table 6. (Preferred Topics Among Respondents and the Compatibility of Their Content with Their Religious Inclinations)

Religious Inclinations	Topics	Yes	No	Sometimes	Total
Doctrinal	Frequency	22	06	48	76
	Percentage	48.89%	42.87%	45.28%	46.06%
Devotional	Frequency	12	02	22	36
	Percentage	26.67%	14.28%	20.76%	21.82%
Transactions	Frequency	00	01	11	12
	Percentage	00.00%	7.14%	10.37%	7.27%
Ethics and Morals	Frequency	06	02	14	22
	Percentage	13.33%	14.28%	13.20%	13.34%
Preaching and Guidance	Frequency	03	01	03	07
	Percentage	6.67%	7.14%	2.84%	4.24%
Intellectual and Cultural	Frequency	02	02	08	12
	Percentage	4.44%	14.28%	7.55%	7.27%
Total	Frequency	45	14	106	165

	Percentage	100%	100%	100%	100%
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From the table above, we observe that the highest percentage, 46.06%, is for respondents who follow doctrinal topics. Within this group, 48.89% believe that these topics align with their religious inclinations, while the percentages are close among those who believe they do not align or sometimes align. The second-highest percentage, 21.82%, is related to devotional topics, with 26.67% of respondents believing these topics align with their inclinations, 20.76% believing they sometimes align, and 14.28% believing they do not align with their religious inclinations.

The third-highest percentage, 13.34%, pertains to topics on ethics and morals. Here, 14.28% of respondents believe these topics do not align with their religious inclinations, while the percentages are close for those who believe they do or sometimes align. The fourth percentage, 7.27%, relates to topics on transactions and intellectual and cultural subjects. For transactions, the highest percentage, 10.37%, represents respondents who believe they sometimes align with their religious inclinations, while 7.14% believe they do not align.

For intellectual and cultural topics, the highest percentage, 14.28%, represents those who believe these topics do not align with their religious inclinations, followed by 7.55% who believe they sometimes align, and 4.44% who believe they do align.

The lowest percentage, 4.24%, pertains to topics on preaching and guidance, with the highest percentage, 7.14%, representing respondents who believe these topics do not align with their religious inclinations. The second-highest percentage, 6.67%, represents those who believe they do align, and 2.84% believe they sometimes align with their religious inclinations.

From the above, we observe that some topics, such as doctrinal and devotional subjects, as well as those related to ethics and morals, align with respondents' religious inclinations. However, topics related to transactions, preaching and guidance, and intellectual and cultural subjects do not align with the respondents' religious inclinations. This could be due to various factors, including the type of topics presented, the way they address different

issues, and the sources used to convince viewers and solidify ideas, all of which affect their inclination toward or away from certain topics.

Table 7. (Illustration of the extent to which religious culture is reinforced among respondents through their following of religious posts on Facebook)

Reinforcement of Religious Culture	Frequency	Percentage
To a large extent	12	7.27%
To some extent	134	81.21%
No change	19	11.52%
Total	165	100%

Based on the above table, it is observed that the highest percentage, estimated at 81.21%, is for respondents who believe that following religious content on Facebook has somewhat reinforced their religious culture. The second-highest percentage, at 11.52%, is for respondents who believe that their religious culture has not changed. The third percentage, at 7.27%, is for respondents who believe that their religious culture has been greatly reinforced.

From this, we see that most respondents believe that their religious culture has been reinforced to some extent, meaning that religious posts on Facebook have not been able to educate them religiously in the way that the respondents desire. This could be attributed to the scarcity of these posts on one hand, and the types of topics they cover, which may not address all of the viewers' religious concerns and inquiries, on the other hand.

Table 8. (Illustration of the extent to which religious content on Facebook addresses the issues and problems faced by individuals)

Addresses Issues	Frequency	Percentage
To a large extent	21	12.73%
To some extent	126	76.36%
Does not address	18	10.91%
Total	165	100%

Based on the above table, it is observed that the highest percentage, estimated at 76.36%, is for respondents who believe that religious posts on Facebook somewhat address the issues and problems they face. The second percentage, estimated at 12.73%, is for respondents who believe that religious posts address the individual's problems and issues to a large extent. The last percentage, estimated at 10.91%, is for respondents who believe that religious posts do not address the problems and issues faced by individuals.

From this, we observe that the majority of respondents believe that religious posts on Facebook somewhat address the problems and issues they face. This suggests that religious posts on Facebook do not fully satisfy their concerns, particularly those that they seek answers or solutions for, especially the problems they encounter in their daily lives and their lived reality.

5. General Conclusion:

The main question of the study is: To what extent do religious posts on social media contribute to the religious education of young people? This can be answered through the conclusions drawn from the study's hypotheses:

- Religious posts on social media garner significant interest among young people, as the majority rank their preference for following religious posts second only to social posts. However, they do not consistently watch these posts; rather, they do so occasionally or rarely. Additionally, they do not watch the entire program but rather the majority of it or only parts.
- The study also demonstrated that the motivation for young people to follow religious posts is the desire to increase their religious knowledge. This is because the content of these posts aligns with their religious inclinations, particularly topics related to theology, worship, ethics, and morality. They evaluate some of these topics as closer to success, while most are considered unsuccessful. Therefore, the more the content of religious posts aligns with the interests of young people, the more it contributes to their religious education.
- Regarding the style in which religious posts are presented, young people find it to be simple and relevant to contemporary issues, aligning with their lived reality. Thus, it can be said that

the style in which religious posts are presented on social media plays a role in enhancing the religious knowledge of young people.

6. Conclusion:

The importance of religious posts (on social media) and topics stems from the significance of religion in the lives of community members. These posts aim to maintain the strong presence of religion and contribute to forming individuals who understand their religious duties and satisfy various religious interests and concerns that can increase their level of awareness and religious knowledge. Through this study, we explore the role of religious posts (on social media) and their contribution to addressing the interests and concerns of young people and enhancing their religious education. We found that these posts are of great interest to young people, as the content they offer aligns with their religious interests. This can be attributed to the qualities these posts offer, especially given that we live in an era where Facebook has become an important source of knowledge and education. Therefore, their views on these posts indicate that they meet their needs and interests to enhance their understanding, awareness, and knowledge.

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